



ROOT CANAL POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Root canal therapy often takes one or more appointments to complete. After each appointment when anesthetic has been used, your lips, teeth and tongue may be numb for several hours. Avoid any chewing on the side of the treated tooth until the numbness has completely worn off.

A temporary filling is placed by our office to protect the tooth or teeth between appointments.

Between appointments, it's common (and not a problem) for a small portion of your temporary filling to wear away or break off. If the entire temporary filling falls out, please call our office so it can be replaced.

To protect the tooth and help keep your temporary filling in place:

- Avoid chewing sticky foods (especially gum).
- Avoid biting hard foods and hard substances, such as ice, fingernails and pencils.
- If possible, chew only on the opposite side of your mouth.

Usually, the last step after root canal treatment is the **placement of a crown** on the tooth. A crown covers and protects the tooth from breaking in the future. Unless otherwise noted by the dentist, it is critical to have a crown placed on your root canal therapy treated tooth **as soon as possible**.

Delay in obtaining final restoration (crown) may result in fracture and/or possible loss of the tooth. If your bite feels uneven, or you're have persistent pain, or have any other questions or concerns, please call our dental office at 207-877-2200.

It's normal to experience some discomfort for several days after a root canal therapy appointment, especially when chewing. It is not uncommon for a tooth to be uncomfortable or even exhibit a dull ache immediately after receiving root canal therapy. This should subside within a few days (or even weeks). Even if you were not experiencing any discomfort prior to treatment, it is normal for you to experience some degree of discomfort for a few days after. The tenderness is normal and is no cause for alarm.

If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them **for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone**.

If you are experiencing pain after your appointment, we recommend taking over the counter pain medication. We recommend ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin) or naproxen (Aleve, Anaprox). Should you experience discomfort that cannot be controlled with pain medications or should swelling develop, **please call our office at 207-877-2200**.

To further reduce pain and swelling, rinse three times a day with warm salt water; dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water, then rinse, swish, and spit. It's important to maintain good oral hygiene.